

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

22nd CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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WORK ON SAUGERTIES HITS FACILITY TO RESTART

SAUGERTIES - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-22) today was joined by Mayor Bob Yerick, Supervisor Greg Helsmoortel and Tom Struzzieri, the owner of Horseshows in the Sun (HITS), to announce that work on the Saugerties Equestrian Facility will be restarted. Hinchey worked with Struzzieri and local officials to resolve issues raised by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) concerning wetlands on the property.

"Tom Struzzieri has shown a strong commitment to building this important facility and to doing it in an environmentally appropriate way," said Hinchey. "I am very pleased that we have addressed the Army Corps' concerns and that this project can now go forward. This will be a great boost for the economy of Saugerties. It's also an attractive addition to the community that preserves 125 acres of sensitive, undeveloped lands and complements the recreational district in the town."

Based in Saugerties, HITS is a special events management company that primarily focuses on producing hunter/jumper horse shows. HITS produced its first show in 1982 and has since grown into a nationwide company, producing shows in California, Florida, Arizona, New York, Virginia, and Nevada. HITS currently produces shows each summer in Wawarsing.

Wanting to expand, HITS acquired property in Saugerties on which to build a state-of-the-art equestrian facility. Earlier this year, ACOE raised concerns about wetland areas on the property and HITS suspended its construction work. The company, along with the town and the village, sought Hinchey's assistance in facilitating its dealings with ACOE. Hinchey intervened and brokered several meetings and communications between the concerned parties.

After several months of negotiations, an agreement has now been reached that will allow the project to go forward in a way that will greatly benefit the environment. All but three acres of the impacted wetlands were found to have been previously disturbed. To show his commitment to environmental conservation and stewardship, Struzzieri is contributing \$250,000 toward the acquisition of 125 acres of property adjacent to the Esopus Creek in the Village of Saugerties. This acquisition by the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development and the Esopus Creek Conservancy will mitigate the affected three acres.

HITS plans to produce seven shows at the Saugerties Equestrian Facility next year. It is estimated that the facility will annually generate \$30 million of economic activity for Saugerties and the surrounding area.